

**RCW 43.185C.260 Youth services—Officer taking child into custody—Authorization—Duration of custody—Transporting—Report on suspected abuse or neglect.** (1) A law enforcement officer shall take a child into custody:

(a) If a law enforcement agency has been contacted by the parent of the child that the child is absent from parental custody without consent; or

(b) If a law enforcement officer reasonably believes, considering the child's age, the location, and the time of day, that a child is in circumstances which constitute a danger to the child's safety or that a child is violating a local curfew ordinance; or

(c) If an agency legally charged with the supervision of a child has notified a law enforcement agency that the child has run away from placement.

(2) Law enforcement custody shall not extend beyond the amount of time reasonably necessary to transport the child to a destination authorized by law and to place the child at that destination. Law enforcement custody continues until the law enforcement officer transfers custody to a person, agency, or other authorized entity under this chapter, or releases the child because no placement is available. Transfer of custody is not complete unless the person, agency, or entity to whom the child is released agrees to accept custody.

(3) If a law enforcement officer takes a child into custody pursuant to either subsection (1)(a) or (b) of this section and transports the child to a crisis residential center, the officer shall, within twenty-four hours of delivering the child to the center, provide to the center a written report detailing the reasons the officer took the child into custody. The center shall provide the department of children, youth, and families with a copy of the officer's report if the youth is in the care of or receiving services from the department of children, youth, and families.

(4) If the law enforcement officer who initially takes the juvenile into custody or the staff of the crisis residential center have reasonable cause to believe that the child is absent from home because he or she is abused or neglected, a report shall be made immediately to the department of children, youth, and families.

(5) Nothing in this section affects the authority of any political subdivision to make regulations concerning the conduct of minors in public places by ordinance or other local law.

(6) If a law enforcement officer has a reasonable suspicion that a child is being unlawfully harbored in violation of RCW 13.32A.080, the officer shall remove the child from the custody of the person harboring the child and shall transport the child to one of the locations specified in RCW 43.185C.265.

(7) If a law enforcement officer takes a juvenile into custody pursuant to subsection (1)(b) of this section and reasonably believes that the juvenile may be the victim of sexual exploitation, the officer shall:

(a) Transport the child to:

(i) An evaluation and treatment facility as defined in RCW 71.34.020, including the receiving centers established in RCW 7.68.380, for purposes of evaluation for behavioral health treatment authorized under chapter 71.34 RCW, including adolescent-initiated treatment, family-initiated treatment, or involuntary treatment; or

(ii) Another appropriate youth-serving entity or organization including, but not limited to:  
(A) A HOPE Center as defined under RCW 43.185C.010;  
(B) A foster family home as defined under RCW 74.15.020;  
(C) A crisis residential center as defined under RCW 43.185C.010;

or

(D) A community-based program that has expertise working with adolescents in crisis; or

(b) Coordinate transportation to one of the locations identified in (a) of this subsection, with a liaison dedicated to serving commercially sexually exploited children established under RCW 74.14B.070 or a community service provider.

(8) Law enforcement shall have the authority to take into protective custody a child who is or is attempting to engage in sexual conduct with another person for money or anything of value for purposes of investigating the individual or individuals who may be exploiting the child and deliver the child to an evaluation and treatment facility as defined in RCW 71.34.020, including the receiving centers established in RCW 7.68.380, for purposes of evaluation for behavioral health treatment authorized under chapter 71.34 RCW, including adolescent-initiated treatment, family-initiated treatment, or involuntary treatment.

(9) No child may be placed in a secure facility except as provided in this chapter. [2020 c 331 § 8; 2019 c 312 § 15; 2018 c 58 § 61; 2017 c 277 § 4; 2015 c 69 § 13; 2000 c 123 § 6; 1997 c 146 § 2; 1996 c 133 § 10; 1995 c 312 § 6; 1994 sp.s. c 7 § 505; 1990 c 276 § 5; 1986 c 288 § 1; 1985 c 257 § 7; 1981 c 298 § 2; 1979 c 155 § 19. Formerly RCW 13.32A.050.]

**Finding—2020 c 331:** See note following RCW 7.68.380.

**Effective date—Findings—Intent—2019 c 312:** See notes following RCW 7.21.080.

**Effective date—2018 c 58:** See note following RCW 28A.655.080.

**Short title—2015 c 69:** See RCW 43.330.911.

**Findings—Short title—Intent—Construction—1996 c 133:** See notes following RCW 13.32A.197.

**Short title—1995 c 312:** See note following RCW 13.32A.010.

**Finding—Intent—Severability—1994 sp.s. c 7:** See notes following RCW 43.70.540.

**Intent—1990 c 276:** See RCW 13.32A.015.

**Conflict with federal requirements—Severability—1990 c 276:** See notes following RCW 13.32A.020.

**Severability—1986 c 288:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1986 c 288 § 13.]

**Severability—1985 c 257:** See note following RCW 13.34.165.

**Severability—1981 c 298:** See note following RCW 13.32A.040.

**Effective date—Severability—1979 c 155:** See notes following RCW 13.04.011.